

Alabama Public Service Commission Gas Pipeline Safety

Current State Rules, Possible Rule Changes,
Violation Process

Marketing Strategy



Gas Pipeline Safety
State Rules



Notice of Probable
Violation Process




Plans, Comments,
Questions


Current State rules 1 through 14.

- ▶ State Rules can be located on <https://psc.alabama.gov>
- ▶ The website also contains some of the forms required by the rules for Gas Pipeline Safety.
- ▶ From the website operators can also track proposed rules during the rule making process.


Where to locate state rules and forms.




Transportation



Commissioner Twinkle Andress Cavanaugh, President



Commissioner Jeremy H. Oden, Place 1



Commissioner Chip Beeker, Place 2

Consumers How do I?


Document Filings

Commission Meeting


APSC Calendar

Live Streaming of Commission Meeting


Regulated Utilities & Companies




Electricity




Gas




Telecom




WasteWater



Gas Pipeline Safety

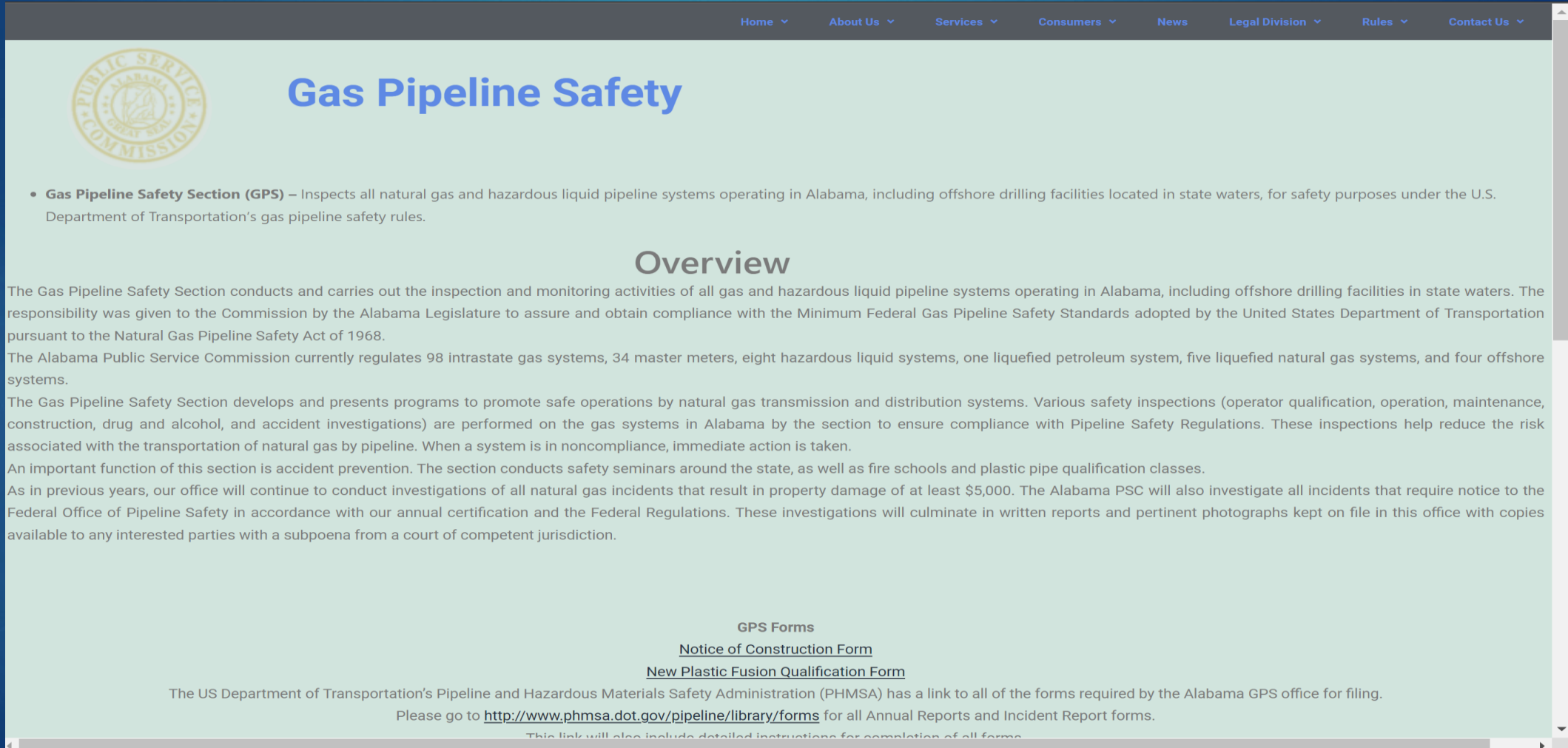


Transportation




Railroad Safety

Gas Pipeline Safety's main page.



The screenshot shows the main page of the Alabama Gas Pipeline Safety website. At the top is a dark navigation bar with links: Home, About Us, Services, Consumers, News, Legal Division, Rules, and Contact Us. Below this is a light blue header section featuring the Alabama Public Service Commission seal on the left and the title "Gas Pipeline Safety" in large blue font. A bullet point describes the Gas Pipeline Safety Section (GPS) as inspecting all natural gas and hazardous liquid pipeline systems in Alabama. The main content area is titled "Overview" and contains several paragraphs detailing the section's responsibilities, the number of regulated systems (98 intrastate, 34 master meters, etc.), and the types of safety programs and investigations conducted. At the bottom, there is a section for "GPS Forms" with links to the "Notice of Construction Form" and the "New Plastic Fusion Qualification Form". A final paragraph mentions a link to the PHMSA website for all required forms.

Home ▾ About Us ▾ Services ▾ Consumers ▾ News Legal Division ▾ Rules ▾ Contact Us ▾



Gas Pipeline Safety

- **Gas Pipeline Safety Section (GPS)** – Inspects all natural gas and hazardous liquid pipeline systems operating in Alabama, including offshore drilling facilities located in state waters, for safety purposes under the U.S. Department of Transportation's gas pipeline safety rules.

Overview

The Gas Pipeline Safety Section conducts and carries out the inspection and monitoring activities of all gas and hazardous liquid pipeline systems operating in Alabama, including offshore drilling facilities in state waters. The responsibility was given to the Commission by the Alabama Legislature to assure and obtain compliance with the Minimum Federal Gas Pipeline Safety Standards adopted by the United States Department of Transportation pursuant to the Natural Gas Pipeline Safety Act of 1968.

The Alabama Public Service Commission currently regulates 98 intrastate gas systems, 34 master meters, eight hazardous liquid systems, one liquefied petroleum system, five liquefied natural gas systems, and four offshore systems.

The Gas Pipeline Safety Section develops and presents programs to promote safe operations by natural gas transmission and distribution systems. Various safety inspections (operator qualification, operation, maintenance, construction, drug and alcohol, and accident investigations) are performed on the gas systems in Alabama by the section to ensure compliance with Pipeline Safety Regulations. These inspections help reduce the risk associated with the transportation of natural gas by pipeline. When a system is in noncompliance, immediate action is taken.

An important function of this section is accident prevention. The section conducts safety seminars around the state, as well as fire schools and plastic pipe qualification classes.

As in previous years, our office will continue to conduct investigations of all natural gas incidents that result in property damage of at least \$5,000. The Alabama PSC will also investigate all incidents that require notice to the Federal Office of Pipeline Safety in accordance with our annual certification and the Federal Regulations. These investigations will culminate in written reports and pertinent photographs kept on file in this office with copies available to any interested parties with a subpoena from a court of competent jurisdiction.

GPS Forms

[Notice of Construction Form](#)

[New Plastic Fusion Qualification Form](#)

The US Department of Transportation's Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) has a link to all of the forms required by the Alabama GPS office for filing.

Please go to <http://www.phmsa.dot.gov/pipeline/library/forms> for all Annual Reports and Incident Report forms.

This link will also include detailed instructions for completion of all forms.

Gas Pipeline Safety's main page

GPS Forms

[Notice of Construction Form](#)

[New Plastic Fusion Qualification Form](#)

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Reporting Gas & Hazard Liquid Incidents

If you sense a whiff of natural gas or something with a sulfur-like odor in the air, it might be a natural gas pipeline leak. To Report a Natural Gas or Hazardous Liquid Pipeline-Related Leak or Incident of \$5,000 or more in total damages, call the Gas Pipeline Safety Office at (334) 242-5778 (weekdays from 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM).

After 5 PM, weekends and holidays, if there is no answer, Call E-911 or see the map below and contact the Gas Pipeline Safety Staff Representative nearest to your area. If no answer, go to the next nearest GPS Staff Representative, etc.

Gas Pipeline Safety Contact List

• [Alabama's](#) Underground Damage Prevention Act

• [Alabama 811](#)

• [Common Ground Alliance](#)

GPS Rules

Training

Seminars

Natural Gas Workshops

Contact Us

Updates and Recommended Links

State Rules 1-14

- ▶ 900-7-1 Applicability
- ▶ 900-7-2 Operating and Maintenance Plans - Filings
- ▶ 900-7-3 Emergency Plans - Filings
- ▶ 900-7-4 Updating of Filings
- ▶ 900-7-5 Drug Testing of Employees by Pipeline Operators
- ▶ 900-7-6 Reporting of Construction Work
- ▶ 900-7-7 Annual Reporting
- ▶ 900-7-8 Safety Related Condition Reports
- ▶ 900-7-9 Telephonic Reporting of Accidents/Incidents
- ▶ 900-7-10 Accident/Incident Reporting
- ▶ 900-7-11 Safety Compliance Proceedings.
- ▶ 900-7-12 Applicable Safety Regulations
- ▶ 900-7-13 Abandoned or Inactive Gas Service Lines
- ▶ 900-7-14 Recommended fines for probable violations

State Rule #1

- ▶ 900-7-1 (GPS Rule 1): Applicability.
 - These rules and regulations shall govern public utilities and persons subject to Title 37, Chapter 4, Article 3 and Article 3A of the Code of Alabama 1975.

State Rule # 2

- ▶ **900-7-2 (GPS Rule 2): Operating and Maintenance Plans – Filings.**
 - **All public utilities and persons, as defined by Section 37-4-80(1) or Section 37-4-90(1), Code of Alabama 1975, shall file with this Commission on or before the effective date of these rules, an operating and maintenance plan which meets the requirements of Title 49 C.F.R. Part 192.601 or 195.400, et seq.**

State Rule # 3

- ▶ **900-7-3 (GPS Rule 3): Emergency Plans - Filings.**
 - **All public utilities and persons, as defined by Section 37-4-80(1) or Section 37-4-90(1), Code of Alabama 1975, shall file with this Commission on or before the effective date of these rules, an emergency plan which meets the requirements of Title 49 C.F.R. Part 192.615 or 195.402, et seq.**

State Rule # 4

- ▶ **900-7-4 (GPS Rule 4): Updating of Filings.**
 - **All public utilities and persons, as defined by Section 37-4-80(1) or Section 37-4-90(1), Code of Alabama 1975, shall keep current the filings required by Rules 2 and 3 by filing with this Commission, within 10 days of adoption, any amendments, revisions, substitutes or revisions of the filings required by Rules 2 and 3.**

State Rule # 5

- ▶ 900-7-5 (GPS Rule 5): Drug Testing of Employees by Pipeline Operators.
 - Operators of pipeline facilities subject to the jurisdiction of this Commission shall adopt an employee drug testing program that complies with the requirements of Title 49 C.F.R., Part 199, and any future amendments thereto

State Rule # 6

- ▶ 900-7-6 (GPS Rule 6): Reporting of Construction Work.
 - All construction work involving the addition and/or replacement of gas or hazardous liquids pipelines or mains greater than 1000 feet in length shall be reported to the Alabama Public Service Commission before construction begins.

State Rule # 7

- ▶ **900-7-7 (GPS Rule 7): Annual Reporting.**
 - All public utilities and persons, as defined by Section 37-4-80(1) or Section 37-4-90(1), Code of Alabama 1975, shall file annually with this Commission on or before March 15, for the preceding calendar year, a copy of U.S. Department of Transportation Form RSPA F 7100.1-1 which meets the requirements of Title 49 C.F.R. Part 191.11 for Distribution systems; Form PHMSA F 7100.2.1 which meets the requirements of Title 49 Part 191.17(a) for Transmission and Gathering systems; Form PHMSA 7100.3-1 which meets the requirements of Title 49 Part 191.17(b) for Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) systems; or on or before June 15, for the preceding calendar year, a copy of PHMSA F 7000-1.1 which meets the requirements of Title 49 Part 195.49 for Hazardous Liquids systems.

State Rule # 8

- ▶ **900-7-8 (GPS Rule 8): Safety Related Condition Reports.**
 - **All public utilities and persons, as defined by Section 37-4-80(1) or Section 37-4-90(1), Code of Alabama 1975, shall file updates to all Safety Related Condition Reports each 30 days until such**

State Rule # 9

- ▶ 900-7-9 (GPS Rule 9): Telephonic Reporting of Accidents/Incidents
 - 1. Definitions (as used in this Section)
 - (a) Damage means the dollar amount of loss to the operator including lost product, material costs, labor costs, equipment costs and site clean-up. Damage does not include costs related to third-party vehicles or equipment.

State Rule # 10

- ▶ **900-7-10 (GPS Rule 10): Accident/Incident Reporting**
 - All public utilities and persons, as defined by Section 37-4-80(1) or Section 37-4-90(1), Code of Alabama 1975, shall file with this Commission, within thirty (30) days of a reportable accident/incident, a copy of the U.S. Department of Transportation Form PHMSA F 7100.1 for Distributions systems; Form PHMSA F 7100.2 for Transmission and Gathering Systems; Form PHMSA F 7000-1 for Hazardous Liquids systems; or Form PHMSA F 7100.3 for Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) systems.

State Rule # 11

- ▶ **900-7-11 (GPS Rule 11): Safety Compliance Proceedings.**
 - (a) Overview: Safety Compliance Proceedings (sometimes referred to as “SCPs”) are intended to provide the APSC and its staff with the ability to be more proactive in addressing pipeline safety issues which pose a moderate to serious threat to public safety, property or the environment without having to rely exclusively on the more formal investigative procedures which are established by Alabama statute. SCPs may be recommended by the GPS Administrator and the UED Director, and instituted by the APSC Executive Director when there is a determination that a particular pipeline or gas facility has, or continues to have, a condition or conditions that pose a moderate to serious pipeline integrity risk which endangers public safety, property, or the environment.

State Rule

- ▶ **900-7-12 (GPS Rule 12): Applicable Safety Regulations**
 - The standards established in 49 CFR Parts 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 198, and 199 and all applicable sections and amendments thereto are hereby adopted and shall be enforced by the Alabama Public Service Commission as the controlling standards for the construction and maintenance of safe and adequate intrastate natural gas and hazardous liquid pipeline facilities under the jurisdiction of the Alabama Public Service Commission.

State Rule # 13

- ▶ **900-7-13 (GPS Rule 13): Abandoned or Inactive Gas Service Lines**
 - Inactive Gas Service Lines:
 - 1) Definitions as used in this GPS Rule 13 - The following terms shall be defined as set forth below: (a) Abandoned Service Line Those service lines permanently removed from service. (b) Existing or Probable Hazard Leak - A leak that represents an existing or probable hazard to persons or property and requires immediate repair or continuous action until the conditions are no longer hazardous. (c) Inactive Service Lines— Those service lines that continue to have natural gas within them, but have no meter attached to the service riser such that a "no flow" situation exists.

State Rule # 14

- ▶ **900-7-14 (GPS Rule 14): Recommended for probable violations**
 - **14(a): Procedures for the recommendation of fines:** Subject to the consent of the Executive Director and the Commissioners of the Alabama Public Service Commission (the 'APSC'), the Director of the Gas Pipeline Safety Division (the 'GPS Director') may recommend the imposition of fines up to \$1,000 for GPS staff-identified probable violations of the Gas Pipeline Safety Rules and Regulations established at 49 CFR Parts 192 through 199. The Gas Director shall notify the APSC Executive Director and the APSC Commissioners, in writing, of any fines so recommended at least 10 days before proceeding with notification to the affected natural gas and/or hazardous liquid operators ('operators'). If no objections to the recommended fines are communicated by the Executive Director and/or the APSC Commissioners, the GPS Director may proceed with notifying the affected operator of the probable violation(s) and recommended

State Rule # 15 through 100

- ▶ Currently there are only 14 active rules. Rules in the future will be created by 1 of 2 conditions or both.
 - Safety issues identified that need to be addressed. Such as rule 13.
 - To bring our State program into compliance with PHMSA mandated requirements.

Alabama's Current Violation Process

- ▶ NOPV process moving forward. We discuss with the operator during the exit interview what our findings are and any recommendations and NOPVS.
 - The Operator receives the letter with a time frame the operator must:
 - 1.The Operator must respond within the timeframe to our office with an official response on their letter head (By mail or email electronic document: PDF, Word Doc ...)
 - 2.The Operator must begin and complete action within this same timeframe – If work cannot be completed within this timeframe, they must request an extended timeframe for correction. Without an approved extension from our office, they must complete it within the original time frame.

Alabama's Current Violation Process

- 3. We must within a limited amount of time, (the end of the timeframe given in the violation letter) perform a follow-up to correct out the violation(s). Example 90-day time frame we would want to be back there at 90 -100 days. If they have not completed the work or have not started. We will correct the violation right then and re-issue right then. The Operator must receive written Approval from our office for this step to change. It does not matter what their response states.
- If the Operator requested a longer time frame and was approved, then we still show up within the original time frame. Example if they had 90 days, we will be back in 90-100 days. They need to have some documentation and records that show they are meeting or exceeding the arrangements made during the request. If they have not followed the plan in place, then we will correct the violation and re-issue. If they are following the approved plan, we will correct the violation right then and then monitor progress moving forward.
- If in the future they deviate from the plan, we will re-write the violation at that time.

Alabama's Current Violation Process

- All violation(s) will need to be correct, corrected and monitored, or corrected and re-issued. We cannot just monitor a violation. We will try to meet our timeframes for program purposes same as the operator must for our requirements.
- Operators received a timeframe above 45 days and did not meet it, then when the violation is re-issued, the 45-day time frame will be given on all re-issued violations. Any violation re-issued will have to follow this same process as an original violation.



Thank You!

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